

English & Tamil
Monthly Magazine
Volume 05 • Issue 06
January
2022


A TO Z INDIA

Price Rs 65/-

05

Picturistic Landscape

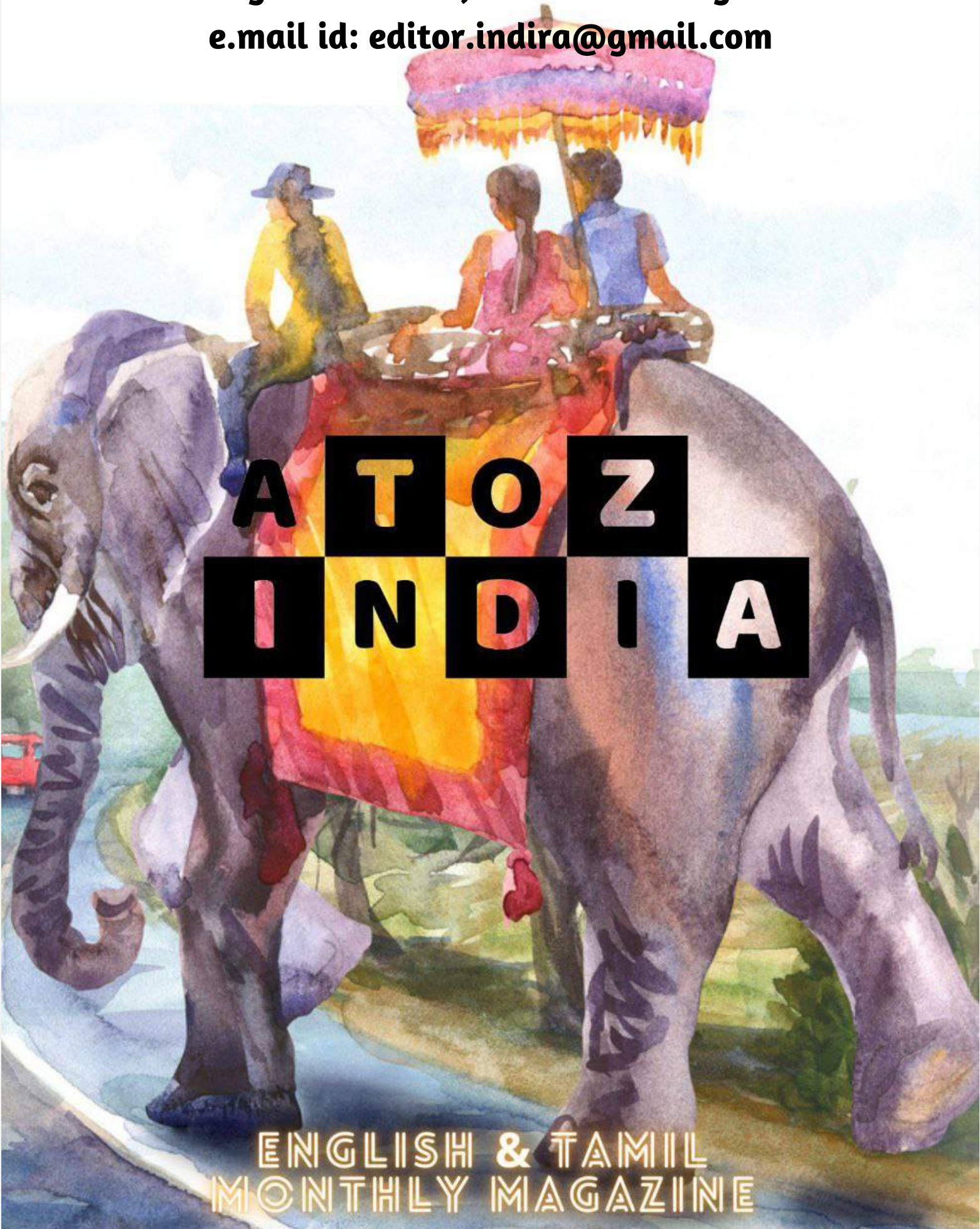
Kerala, India

 Nitin Sharma



Indian Culture ● Indian Art ● Indian Lifestyle ● Indian Religion

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A watercolor illustration of an elephant standing on a path. On its back is a howdah carrying three people: a man in a yellow shirt and hat, a woman in a pink sari, and a man in a blue shirt. A large, colorful umbrella with pink, orange, and yellow fringes is held over them. The elephant is decorated with a red and yellow cloth. The background shows a green landscape and a red car in the distance.

A T O Z I N D I A

**ENGLISH & TAMIL
MONTHLY MAGAZINE**



04

WHY MARGAZHI MONTH IS AUSPICIOUS UNDERSTANDING THE SCIENCE BEHIND ANCIENT HINDU CALENDAR

The auspicious month of Margasheersha, also known as Margazhi in Tamil, has started from 16 December. Margasheersha is considered auspicious for putting efforts into one's own spiritual growth - be it Sadhana, Vrata, Bhajan or Pooja - for the Upasakas of Shiva, Shakti, Vishnu as well as others.

06

THE RISE OF THE PRODIGY M.L. VASANTHAKUMARI

M.L. Vasanthakumari (1928-1990) redefined the way Carnatic music was presented. MS, DKP and MLV - they formed a triumvirate.

inside

A TO Z INDIA: Editorial Address



FROM THE EDITOR

A TO Z INDIA magazine covers the Indian through his art, culture, lifestyle, religion, etc. This magazine gives an insight into the life of Indians from an angle uncovered by others. Turn to find out what it is about and to immerse yourself into an entirely different culture.

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A TO Z INDIA Magazine has made a constant care to make sure that content is accurate on the date of publication. The views expressed in the articles reflect the author(s) opinions.

From the Editor's Desk:

Why Margazhi Month Is Auspicious
Understanding The Science Behind Ancient Hindu Calendar

The auspicious month of Margasheersha, also known as Margazhi in Tamil, has started from 16 December.



Margasheersha is considered auspicious for putting efforts into one's own spiritual growth - be it Sadhana, Vrata, Bhajan or Pooja - for the Upasakas of Shiva, Shakti, Vishnu as well as others.

Margasheersha is named after the Mrigshira Nakshatra - the time when the full moon appears closest to the Orion constellation. The name can itself be taken to mean 'the one that leads us to the right path'.

In Bhagavadgeeta, Sri Krishna says: मासानां मार्गशीर्षोऽहमृतूनां कुसुमाकरः , that is, among the months, Srikrishna is the Margasheersha, indicating that he himself puts the Bhakta on the path towards the divine.

Several festivals fall in this month. On the Shukla Ekadashi (the 11th day of the waxing moon phase) Gita Jayanti is celebrated. Mokshada (the giver of Moksha) Ekadashi or Vaikuntha Ekadasi falls in this month.

The Krishna Paksha Ashtami (eighth day of the waning moon phase) is celebrated as the Kalabhairava Ashtami, the day when Shiva manifested himself as Kalabhairava.

Thiruvathira or Arudhra Darisanam is also celebrated in this month with grandeur in the states of Tamil Nadu and Kerala. In this festival, the cosmic dance of Shiva as Nataraja - representing the continuous cycle of creation and destruction - is celebrated.

Dattatreya Jayanti occurs on Poornima (full moon day) of the Margashirsha, and Katyayani Vrata that the Gopis carried out for Srikrishna also falls in the Margasheersha. The pilgrimage to holy shrine of Sri Ayyappa in Sabarimala also falls in this month.

Indira Srivatsa

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Picturistic Landscape:

Kerala, India

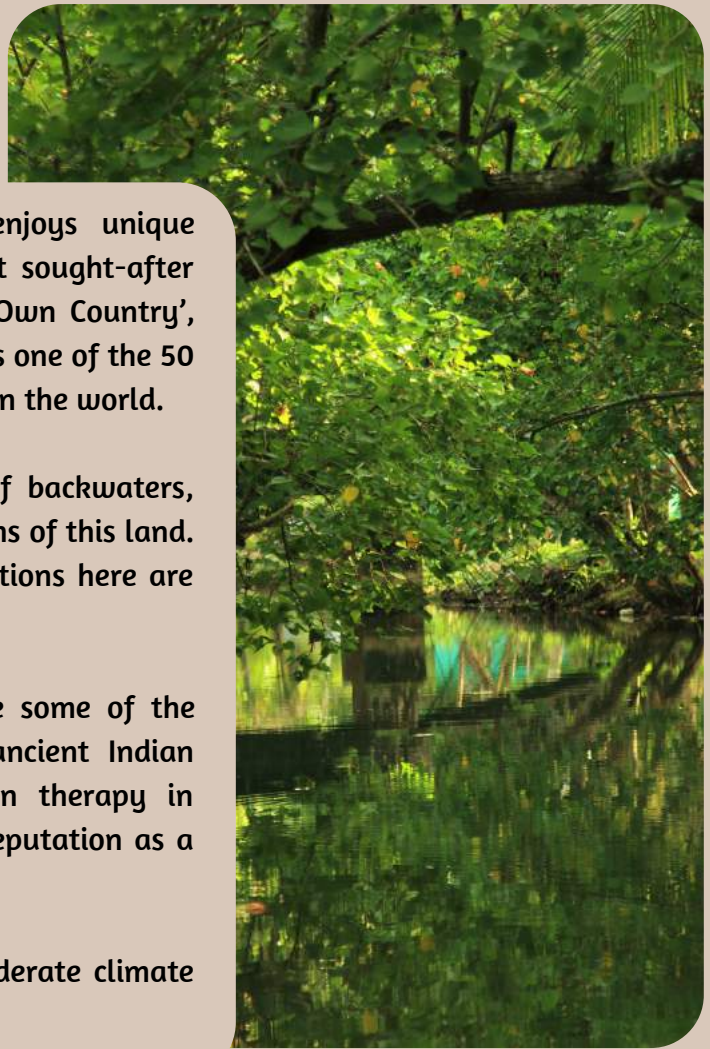
 Nitin Sharma

Kerala, located on the south-western tip of India, enjoys unique geographical features that have made it one of the most sought-after tourist destinations in Asia. Fondly referred to as 'God's Own Country', Kerala was selected by the National Geographic Traveller as one of the 50 destinations of a lifetime and one of the thirteen paradises in the world.

An equable climate, serene beaches, tranquil stretches of backwaters, lush hill stations and exotic wildlife are the major attractions of this land. A unique advantage of Kerala is that most of the destinations here are only a two - four hour drive from the other.

Classical art forms, colourful festivals, exotic cuisine are some of the cultural marvels that await travellers. Ayurveda, the ancient Indian system of medicine and Panchakarma, the rejuvenation therapy in Ayurveda have also helped Kerala to gain a pan-global reputation as a worth-visit destination.

Season never ends in Kerala, thanks to the year-long moderate climate and numerous festivals and events.



Tracing the rise of the prodigy, M.L. Vasanthakumari:

The evergreen M.L. Vasanthakumari

 Chandra. B

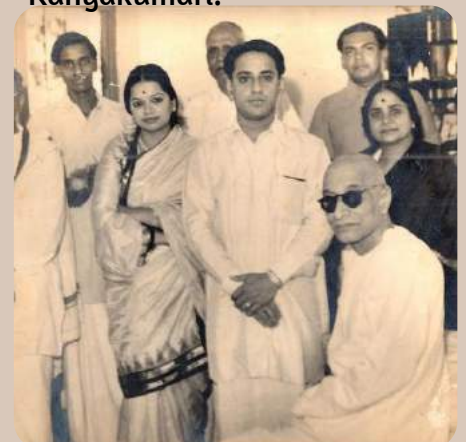
M.L. Vasanthakumari (1928-1990) redefined the way Carnatic music was presented. MS, DKP and MLV — they formed a triumvirate. But MLV's penchant for innovation made her a class apart. A disciple of legend G.N. Balasubramaniam, she followed his quicksilver style of rendition but brought to it her own charm and individuality creating a whole new bani. Madras Lalithangi Vasanthakumari was a prodigy, giving a public performance when she was all of 13. Trained by mother Lalithangi, an accomplished vocalist, Vasanthi accompanied her mother in concerts from the age of 11. Her father Koothanur Ayyasamy Iyer was a musician too. MLV stepped in to present a concert in Bangalore when her mother had to withdraw on health grounds.

There was no looking back, as MLV grew in stature, her vidwat gaining a kind of depth that left the lay and the connoisseur mesmerised. Her RTPs, in particular, were something special. Her adventurous spirit made her launch into delineations of rare ragas, her imagination soaring high, leaving the accompanists searching for answers. Audience flocked to listen to her Devarnamas and Dasar kritis. She was heard in every home during Margazhi through Tiruppavai, which she sang, set to tune by Ariyakkudi Ramanuja Iyengar. Stalwarts, including Ustads, bowed to her genius. All who knew her underline the impromptu way in which she steered her concerts.

Sought after across the country and abroad, MLV stood out with her brilliance, which spilled over to films, where she ruled the roost for several decades. MLV's personal life, however, was not as tuneful but she moved on not letting any of it reflect in her public performances, the trademark smile never leaving her face. Warm and generous, she showered friends with gifts. She was married to 'Vikatam' Krishnamurti and the couple had two children — Shankar and Srividya. The latter, trained in music and dance, was a renowned film actor.



Sabhas feted MLV, who at 49 was the youngest woman to be conferred Sangita Kalanidhi by The Music Academy, Madras. The Central Sangeet Natak Akademi honoured her, Mysore University conferred a doctorate on her and as icing on the cake came Padma Bhushan. MLV passed away on October 31, 1990, her legacy safe in the hands of scores of disciples, some of whom have reached great heights, such as Sudha Ragunathan, Charumathi Ramachandran and A. Kanyakumari.



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Manly effort is the physical or mental energy of a human being. It is an attempt to do something when it is difficult to do. The effort includes perseverance with deep involvement.

One should not feel disheartened saying, "This is too difficult for me to do". Effort will bring the greatness of mind. If one abandons any work unfinished, the world would abandon him. On the contrary, if one strives untiringly, he can beat and see the back of fate in retreat. Besides, the good luck of lotus deity, Laxmi, dwells in the persistent efforts of such a man. But, only the goddess of ill-luck (moodevi) resides in one's laziness. Even though something many not be attained by mercy of God, one's strenuous effort will pay the wages and reward.

The philanthropy of a man, who does not take effort to labour, will fail like a sword in a eunuch's hand. But the pride of serving the humanity, will rest in the excellence of one's efforts. So much so, one who loves hard work with effort, but desires not his pleasure, is a strong pillar to support his friends wiping out their sorrows. It is worth mentioning that physical handicap is not a disgrace to anyone; but to be without efforts and the awareness of what ought to know, is a disgrace indeed.

Effort and labour will bring property;
But effortlessness brings only poverty.

The Popular Tradition of Kerala Boat Race:

email id: purushothjune15@gmail.com

 [Purushoth Appu](#)

It makes you think in awe if heaven has inhabited itself on the earth where one can see huge Mountains, roaring waterfalls, sky touching tall trees, wherever you turn, nature is well prevalent. That is why may be Kerala is called the land of God. Tourism, not only inspires and energises Indians, but also foreigners. And for Photographers, it is a dream come true.. They strive amongst themselves to capture the beautiful moments of Art, Culture and the festivities into their cameras. One such festival is this 'Vellam Kali' Boating Race.

Though boat race happens at various places in India in many districts, this game is special as more groups participate as a team in large numbers. This game is conducted in the state of Kerala in places like Alapuzha Chemmancheri, Pathanamthitta and Aranmula. It gives onlookers goosebumps as the racing stream through the water which gives a feel of a 120 feet python with 100 legs pouncing through the water.

The history of boat race starts around four hundred years ago. In the 17th century, the boat race among the kings brought continuous defeat to King Chembagachery. He approached the carpenter Venkata Narayana of the succeeded kingdom. He told the secret of the making of the boat. Small artillery has to be placed and detonated on the edge of the boat to push the boat forcefully forward was the secret. The carpenter Venkat Narayanan was placed under arrest as he had told the secret. He asked the king to permit him to witness the last boat race and the plea was accepted. But the carpenter Venkata Narayan had wrongly exposed the secret and became the reason for the success was felicitated appropriately. After that during the independence struggle and the security in seaways marked the long history of the boat race. In 1952 the first prime minister of independent India, Jawaharlal Nehru, witnessed the boat race in Punnamadam lake on his arrival to Kerala.

After returning back to Delhi, he couldn't forget the excitement of the boat race dedicated a Golden trophy along with a letter saying that the winning club would get a Golden trophy and prize money every year. From then on to till date the festival is conducted with much fanfare. The Annual Boat Race is a matter of pride and honour for the community. They gear up with great enthusiasm as soon as the announcement is made for the race! There is more than just passion amongst the boat racers who begin working on their fitness to practice for the race. Rowers and Anchors who manages the direction of the boat involve in diligent exercising and diet to ensure victory in the race. Each of them desperately wants the trophy and aims with complete dedication performing to the best of each of their potential! The initial 4 kms of the race gets very exciting as all the boats fiercely row at the same pace and it is just the last few milliseconds which decides the victory!

Like Rowers, even boats play an important role in the race. The wood from 'Aanjili' tree is used to make these boats. These trees grow in places like Saanjarapalli, Moonjaar and Thozhupuzha and before the wood is cut down for making boat, certain rituals are followed. Of the enormous 120 feet length of the boat, the back part of the boat alone stands 20 feet tall adding to it's immense stature. As far as the structural design of the boat is concerned, it is made up two designs namely Odichi kuthi and Valachi kuthi and it takes around 6 months to make a boat and costs around 50 lakhs.

The Popular Tradition of Kerala Boat Race:

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 [Purushoth Appu](#)

The boat race conducted on the banks of Pamba river in Aranmula, Pathinthitta district is considered to be a traditional festival of Kerala. Its a blissful sight for the audience watching Racers row the boat with traditional symbols wearing white dhoti, turban with decorative umbrella and flags, singing the songs of 8th century enthusiastically adding extra beauty and thrill to the whole scenario.

It is believed that if it rains during the boat race held during Onam festive season, it brings prosperity to that place. Nowadays, in this changing world, there are a number of boating clubs that are competing and they not only participate in the race, but also bring successful competitors from outside the districts to achieve success. Sponsors from big companies, media and promotions make it a big hype and takes the competition to another level.

Although there is a distinct fanbase for boating groups, village level Rowers are still struggling to cope with the ongoing competition, but they do keep up in continuous participation by maintaining their tradition and not giving up the same.

No wonder this Kerala Boating Race is one such festival that all Indians would like to watch at least once in their life time.

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The Church of Akbar & Christianity in Mughal India



Akbar & Christianity in Mughal India:

In the context of Christianity in India, few conversations ever invoke Agra; even fewer invoke the Mughals. Yet, one of the oldest churches on the subcontinent not only belongs to this city but only came about with enthusiastic Mughal patronage. Patronage that was neither political, nor commercial. Instead, it was an honest expression of intrigue, respect, and acceptance of a religion alien to the land. In and of itself, this was a rarity in Mughal India.

This story explores the journey of Agra's lesser-known gem, the Church of Akbar. The Armenians were some of the first to turn Christian, long before Constantine's Council of Nicea mainstreamed the religion in the Roman Empire. India would largely remain untouched by this new theology for centuries at this point. Not that India didn't have Christianity then. Kerala is said to have been introduced to it by one of the early apostles. But it still wasn't known outside of that region. The rest of India, mostly the Gangetic plains, remained unaware of this new cult for a long time. Armenian traders had been visiting India since antiquity. They came via overland routes, such as the Silk Route, through nations like Persia, Bactria, and Tibet. One of the earliest accounts of Armenian Christian merchants engaging in commerce with the Indian subcontinent comes from 370 BC. That's when the Athenian soldier-turned-historian Xenophon wrote the first-ever biography of Cyrus the Great, founder of the first Persian empire, the Achaemenid Empire. The work was titled *Cyropaedia*. Albeit largely fictional, *Cyropaedia* referenced much of the world around Xenophon and is often seen as a reasonably authentic historical treatise. This text is one of the first to speak of Armenian traders in India. One prominent name in the story of Indo-Armenian relations is Thomas Cana. Traveling overland, this diplomat-cum-merchant not only entered the subcontinent but penetrated as far into the peninsula as the Malabar.

While some accounts call him Armenian, others call him Syrian instead. But that distinction wasn't very prominent during his time. He's said to have led a migration of Mesopotamian Syriac Christians into India some time around the year 750 AD. But these were traders, not preachers or conquerors. They came neither to settle down, not build empires. Nor did they come to evangelize. To them, India was just a pitstop along a longer trade route through Southeast Asia. It was a source of two commodities that fetched them a fortune back home in Europe — muslin and spices. Despite centuries of interface with Christian Armenians, northern India remained untouched by Christianity. Even after Islam, a later religion, became commonplace. This changed with Akbar, the first and probably the only, secular Mughal ruler. One could even argue he was the first secular ruler in India, Mughal or otherwise. This goes to not only his tolerance toward his non-Muslim subjects but also a personal interest in and admiration for other theologies. He was the first Muslim ruler to abolish Jizya, a discriminatory tax placed on non-Muslims just for not being Muslim. At one point, he even floated a new syncretic religion of his own drawing from Islam, Sufism, Zoroastrianism, Hinduism, Christianity and even Judaism. He called it Din-i-Ilahi and expected it to be a great unifier. Although the project failed miserably, it speaks volumes on his commitment to secularism and religious harmony. Part of Akbar's realm was the subcontinent's northernmost frontier, Kashmir. Kashmir was also a melting pot of merchants from distant lands who gathered here looking for the most prized of all spices, saffron.

The Church of Akbar & Christianity in Mughal India



Akbar made frequent trips there just to soak in the beauty of the mountains. On one such trip, he got acquainted with an Armenian merchant named Jacob. Contemporary accounts spell the name as Hakobjan. The emperor had a fair idea of the Armenians' integrity and their knack for commerce. Cementing ties with this community had the potential of doing immense good to the Mughal economy, as social clout those days led to trade monopolies. And Armenia was the gateway to a world of markets yet to be fully explored. This pragmatic endgame in mind, Akbar extended an invite to the merchant and his son. The invite was to settle in his capital along with fellow countrymen.

The offer was to create a permanent central base in India rather than scattered trading outposts which would help with commerce and integration. There were some Armenian traders in parts of Kashmir and Punjab at the time. Akbar asked Jacob to invite all of them to the imperial city where they'd be given citizenship and royal patronage to practice their religion. The Armenian influx was also in part motivated by the Ottoman and Safavid conquests of the Armenian highlands during the fifteenth century. These invasions, and the religious persecutions that followed, caused many Armenian Christians to flee their homeland for safer havens in places like the Indian subcontinent, especially Kashmir. One could see the Ottoman conquest and the persecution that followed as a precursor to the Armenian genocide at the hands of Turkey that would follow five centuries later. Besides business, Akbar was also genuinely interested in their religion, Christianity. He wished to explore and understand it better, which is why he was so keen on having a permanent Armenian community in his capital. To that end, he even offered them the funds and means to build a church of their own. This was the first for a Mughal. That capital was Agra. Agra, alternatively with Lahore, enjoyed this status for a good 112 years from 1526 through 1638.

By 1562, the city already had a thriving Armenian colony along with an Armenian Church, the first ever in North India. A lot of trade was happening, as was a cultural exchange. Akbar proved to be an excellent patron, and a refreshing secular change from his otherwise theocratic predecessors and successors. Within a couple of years, he did away with jizya as well as the lesser-known pilgrim tax, a Mughal tax on Hindus wishing to visit their holy sites. Akbar's regime was a landmark departure from the Islamic theocracy his dynasty has come to be identified with, courtesy his great-grandson. This patronage wasn't mere tokenism as one might mistakenly conclude. The emperor endeavored to fill quite powerful positions in his court with meritorious Armenian Christians.

Some accounts even claim Mariam-uz-Zamani, one of Akbar's wives and Jahangir's titular mother, was an Armenian Christian. Of course, this bit is far from clear as plenty others claim she was the Rajput princess Jodhabai. Today, Akbar's Church struggles to match the grandeur of its better known neighbor, the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception. Also the seat of the Archdiocese of Agra, it's a magnificent structure commonly referred to as St. Peter's and known far beyond the confines of the city. Akbar's Church, however, continues to stand its ground as the sole witness to a Muslim emperor's unparalleled respect for Christianity at a time when another part of the same subcontinent was suffering the brutalities of the Inquisition.



Know your India:

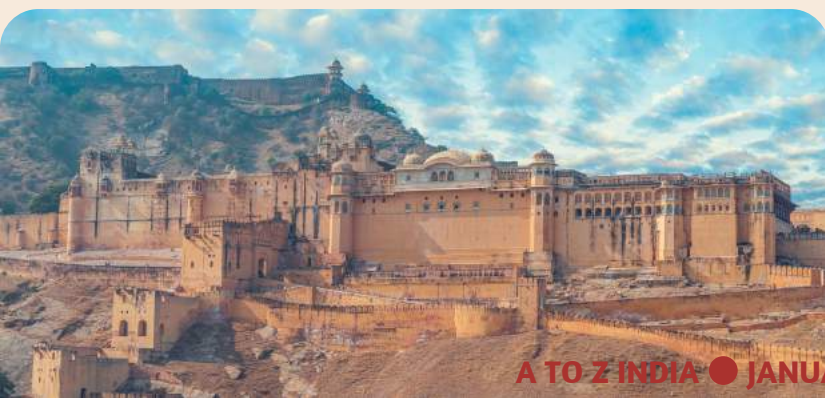
The blessed land, Rajasthan, India



Sridhar

In Rajasthan, there is a rich tradition of making chhatris (memorials) in the memory of their ancestors. Jaswant Thada, located in the foothills of Mehrangarh, the historical fort of Jodhpur, revered as the city of Surya, reflects the ancient culture of Rajasthan, which inspires to pay homage to the legendary Rathore Rajputs.

Known as the Taj Mahal of Rajasthan, Jaswant Thada was built by Maharaja Sardar Singh of Jodhpur in the memory of his father, Jaswant Singh II, in 1899 AD. Undoubtedly, the craft beauty of Jaswant Thada is unmatched, leaving the visitors mesmerized.



Nabanna, the harvest festival:

The popular harvest festival of India



Nabanna, the harvest festival that falls in the month of Agrahayan (Margasirsa). It is a popular ceremony among the rice growers of WB, Bihar, Tripura, & Assam, & the Bangladeshi Hindus. Devi Lakshmi is worshipped at this time, who stands for wealth & fertility.

According to traditional beliefs, a community cannot enjoy the new rice harvest until devi Lakshmi is first offered the new crop or Nabanna. So the farmers will cut and husk a special variety of rice, and offer it first to the Devi as payesh or paramanno.

In some cases, ancestors and local deities are also offered the payesh cooked with nobanno. Other rituals followed today will include greeting the moon with diyas, distributing gifts and kheer to children, and offering rice and other food to the crows.



ஆன்மீகம்:

கோவில் மணிகள்

✍ தமிழினியன்

கோவில் மணிகள் சாதாரண உலோகத்தில் செய்யப்படுவதில்லை. காட்மியம், ஜின்க், லெட், காப்பர், நிக்கல், க்ரோமியம் மற்றும் மாங்கனீஸ் போன்ற பல உலோகங்களை கொண்டு செய்யப்படுபவை தான் மணிகள்.

கோவில் மணியை செய்ய ஒவ்வொரு உலோகத்தையும் சரியான அளவில் கலக்க வேண்டும். அதன் பின்னணியில் இருக்கும் விஞ்ஞானம் என்னவென்று தெரியுமா?

மணியை ஒலிக்க செய்யும் போது ஒவ்வொரு உலோகமும் ஒவ்வொரு தனித்துவமான ஒலியாய் எழுப்பும். இது உங்கள் இடது மற்றும் வலது மூளையை இணைக்க செய்யும்.

அதனால் மணி அடித்த அடுத்த தருணமே, நீண்ட நேரம் ஒலிக்கும் கூர்மையான சத்தம் எழும். இது 7 நொடிகள் வரை நீடிக்கும். மணியில் இருந்து எழும் எதிரொலி உங்கள் உடலில் உள்ள 7 குணமாதல் மையங்களையும் (சக்கரங்கள்) தொடும். அதனால் மணி ஒலித்த உடனேயே, உங்கள் மூளை சில வினாடிகளுக்கு வெறுமையாகி விடும்.

அப்போது மெய்மறதி நிலையை அடைவீர்கள். இந்த மெய்மறதி நிலையில், உங்கள் மூளை சொல்வதை வரவேற்கும் பண்பை பெறும்.



இந்திய கலாச்சாரம்:

இன்றைய இந்தியா

தமிழினியன்

மாட்டின் பாதம் மண்ணில் பட்டு மாட்டு சாணம் நிலத்தில் பட்டு உழுது பயிர்செய்தபோது நிலத்தில் பொன் விளைந்தது. மாட்டு வண்டியில் பயணித்தபோது காற்றும் மாசுபடவில்லை. சேற்றில் இறங்கி வேலை செய்த விவசாயிக்கு வரவில்லை வியாதி. ஆரோக்கியமாக வாழ்ந்து வாழ்க்கையை முழுமையாக வாழ்ந்தார்கள் நம் முன்னோர்கள். உழுவாகனம், பயிர்செய்யவாகனம், பயணிக்க வாகனம், வாகனத்தில் இருந்து வந்த புகை நாம் சுவாசிக்கும் காற்றை மாசுபடுத்தியது. புவி பாதுகாப்பு வலையத்தைக்கூட விடவில்லை. நாம் கண்டு பிடித்த இயந்திரங்களின் விளைவு, செயற்கை உரம் பூமியை விடமாக்கியது. பயிர்கள், பழங்கள், காய்கறிகள், எல்லாவற்றையும் கலப்பினம் செய்தோம். அதை உண்டோம். விலங்குகள், பறவைகள், எதையும் விட்டு வைக்கவில்லை எல்லாவற்றையும் நாசமாக்கி இயற்கையை இயற்கையாக இருக்கவிடவில்லை. எதையும் விடவில்லை மனிதன் வாழத்தகுதியற்றதாக மாற்றி விட்டான் இந்த பூமியை. இப்போது அனைத்தையும் தொலைத்துவிட்டு தேடி அலைகிறான். மனிதன் இழந்தது கிடைக்குமா! மரணம் தான் கிடைத்த பரிசு!



ஆன்மீகம்:

நள்ளிரவில் கோயில் நடைதிறப்பது நியாயமா?

 தமிழினியன்

நள்ளிரவில் கோயில் நடைதிறப்பது நியாயமா?

இரவு 12 மணிக்கு புத்தாண்டு சிறப்பு வழிபாட்டிற்காக கோவில் கதவுகள் திறக்கப்படுகின்றன . இந்த நள்ளிரவு நாடகம் நியாயமா ? இதற்கு சமய ஆகமங்கள் சம்மதிக்கின்றனவா? ஆகம விதிகளைத் தளர்த்தும் அளவிற்கு இந்த நிகழ்வில் ஏதாவது சிறப்பு இருக்கிறதா?

இந்தக் கேள்விகளுக்கு விடைகாண, நம் ஆலய வழிபாட்டு முறையை விவரிக்கும் ஆகமங்கள், பூஜை நேரத்தை எப்படி நிர்ணயம் செய்துள்ளது என்பதைப் பார்ப்போம்.

கோயில்களில் தினம் தோறும் செய்யப்படும் பூஜைகள் நித்தியக் கிரியை என்றும், விசேஷமாக நடத்தப்படும் பூஜைகள் நைமித்திக பூஜைகள் என்று ஆகமங்கள் குறிக்கின்றன. இதில் நித்திய பூஜைகள் எந்தக்காலத்தில் நடத்தப்படவேண்டும் என்று ஆகமங்கள் தெளிவாக விளக்கியுள்ளன.

உஷத்காலம் : சூரிய உதயத்திற்கு மூன்றே முக்கால் நாழிகைக்கு முன் தொடங்கி, சூரிய உதயம் வரை உள்ள காலம். சூரிய உதயம் 6 மணி என்றால் அதிகாலை 4.30 முதல் 6 மணிவரை உஷத்காலம் (ஒரு நாழிகை 24 நிமிடங்கள்)

கால சந்தி : சூரியோதயம் முதல் 10 நாழிகை வரை கால சந்தி. சூரிய உதயம் வரை உள்ள காலம். சூரிய உதயம் 6 மணி என்றால் காலை 6 முதல் 10 மணிவரை கால சந்தி.

உச்சிகால : சூரியன் உச்சத்தில், அதாவது தலைக்கு நேர்மேலே இருக்கும் காலம் பொதுவாக மதியம் 11.30 முதல் 12.30 வரை உள்ள காலம் உச்சி காலம். இந்தப் பூஜைக்குப் பின் கோயில் நடை அடைக்கப்பட வேண்டும்.

சாயரகைஷ : சூரிய அஸ்தமனத்திற்கு மூன்றே முக்கால் நாழிகைக்கு முன் தொடங்கி, சூரிய அஸ்தமனம் வரை உள்ள காலம். சூரிய அஸ்தமனம் 6 மணி என்றால் மாலை 4.30 முதல் 6 மணிவரை சாயரக்கைஷ.

இரண்டாம் காலம் : சூரிய அஸ்தமனம் முதல் மூன்றே முக்கால் நாழிகை வரை உள்ள காலம். சூரிய அஸ்தமனம் 6 மணி என்றால் மாலை 6 முதல் 7.30 மணிவரை சாயரக்கைஷ.

அர்த்த யாமம் : கோயில் நடை அடைப்பதற்கு மூன்றே முக்கால் நாழிகைக்கு முன் தொடங்கி கோயில் நடை அடைப்பதுடன் முடிவடையும். இந்தக் காலம் இரவு 7.30 முதல் 9 வரை. இந்தக் காலங்கள் காமிக ஆகமம் மற்றும் பல ஆகமங்களில் குறிக்கப்பட்டுள்ளன. ஆகம விதிகளின் அடிப்படையில் அமைக்கப்பட்ட கோயில்களில், இந்த விதிகளின்படியே பூஜைகள் நடத்தப்படவேண்டும்.

கால நேரம் தவிர, இறைவனுக்குப் படைக்க வேண்டிய நைவேத்யம், அர்ச்சிக்க வேண்டிய மலர்கள், அபிஷேகிக்க வேண்டிய திரவியங்கள் என்று அனைத்துமே ஆகமங்கள் தெளிவாக விளக்கியுள்ளன.

ஆன்மீகம்:

நள்ளிரவில் கோயில் நடைதிறப்பது நியாயமா?

தமிழினியன்

சித்திரை முதல் பங்குனி வரை இறைவனுக்கு பயன்படுத்த வேண்டிய மலர்களை புட்பவிதி என்ற நூலில் 16 ஆம் நூற்றாண்டில் வாழ்ந்த கமலை ஞானப் பிரகாசர் குறிப்பிட்டுள்ளார். இவரது சீடர் குரு ஞான சம்பந்தரே தருமபுர ஆதீனத்தை ஸ்தாபித்தார்.

காலையில் 4.30 க்குத்தான் கோயில் நடை திறக்கப்பட வேண்டும், இரவு 9 மணிக்கு நடை அடைக்கப்பட வேண்டும் என்பது ஆகம விதி. இந்த விதியை மீறி தமிழ்ப்புத்தாண்டான சித்திரை ஒன்றை வரவேற்கக்கூட கோயில் நடையை நாம் உஷத்காலத்திற்கு முன் திறப்பதில்லையே!

இந்த விதியை மீறி, கிறிஸ்தவப் புத்தாண்டிற்கு இரவு 12 மணிக்கு கோயில் நடை திறப்பது நியாயமா?

அர்த்த யாம பூஜை முடிந்தபின், இறைவனை சிவிகையில் சுமந்து, கோயிலை வலம் வந்து பள்ளியறையில் அம்மையின் அருகில் கொண்டு அமர்த்தியவுடன், அம்மன் சன்னிதியைத் திரையிட வேண்டும்.

திரையிட்டபின் பள்ளியறை பூஜை, பால், பால் பாயாசம், வடை நைவேத்தியத்துடன் செய்யப்பட்டு, தாம்பூலம் சமர்ப்பிக்கப்படும். அது சமயம் தோத்திரப் பாடல்கள் பாடி, வாத்தியம் இசைக்கப்படும். அதன் பின் பள்ளியறைக்கதவுகளை

சிவாச்சாரியார் மூடி அந்தச் சாவியை பைரவர் சன்னிதியில் கொண்டு சமர்ப்பிப்பார். பின்னர் கோயிலை மூடி சாவியை வாயில் காப்பாளரிடம் கொடுப்பார்.

இது போலவே கோயில் நடையைத் திறக்கும் விதியும் ஆகமங்களில் திட்டவட்டமாகக் குறிக்கப்பட்டுள்ளது. சிவாச்சாரியார் காலையில் எழுந்து நீராடிவிட்டு, தனது அனுஷ்டானங்களை முடித்துவிட்டு ஆலயம் செல்ல வேண்டும். அதன் பின் சகலீகரணம் செய்து, சாமான்யார்க்யம் கூட்டி அந்த நீரைத் தன் மீதும் பூஜா பொருட்கள் மீதும் தெளித்து சுத்தி செய்த பின்னரே சிவாச்சாரியார் பூஜை செய்யும் தகுதியைப் பெருகிறார்.

தகுதிபெற்ற சிவாச்சாரியார் காப்பாளரிடம் சாவியை வாங்கி கோயிலைத் திறந்து, பைரவர் சன்னிதிக்குச் சென்று, பொரி நைவேத்யம் செய்து பள்ளியறைச் சாவியை முத்திரையால் எடுக்கவேண்டும். அதன்பின் எல்லா சன்னிதிகளையும் திறக்கவேண்டும்.

திறந்தபின் பள்ளியறைக்குச் சென்று வாத்திய கோஷங்கள் முழங்க திருப்பள்ளி எழுச்சி பாடவேண்டும்.

Meruwardhanaswami temple at Pandrethan near Srinagar

Mid 10-th Century Shiva Temple

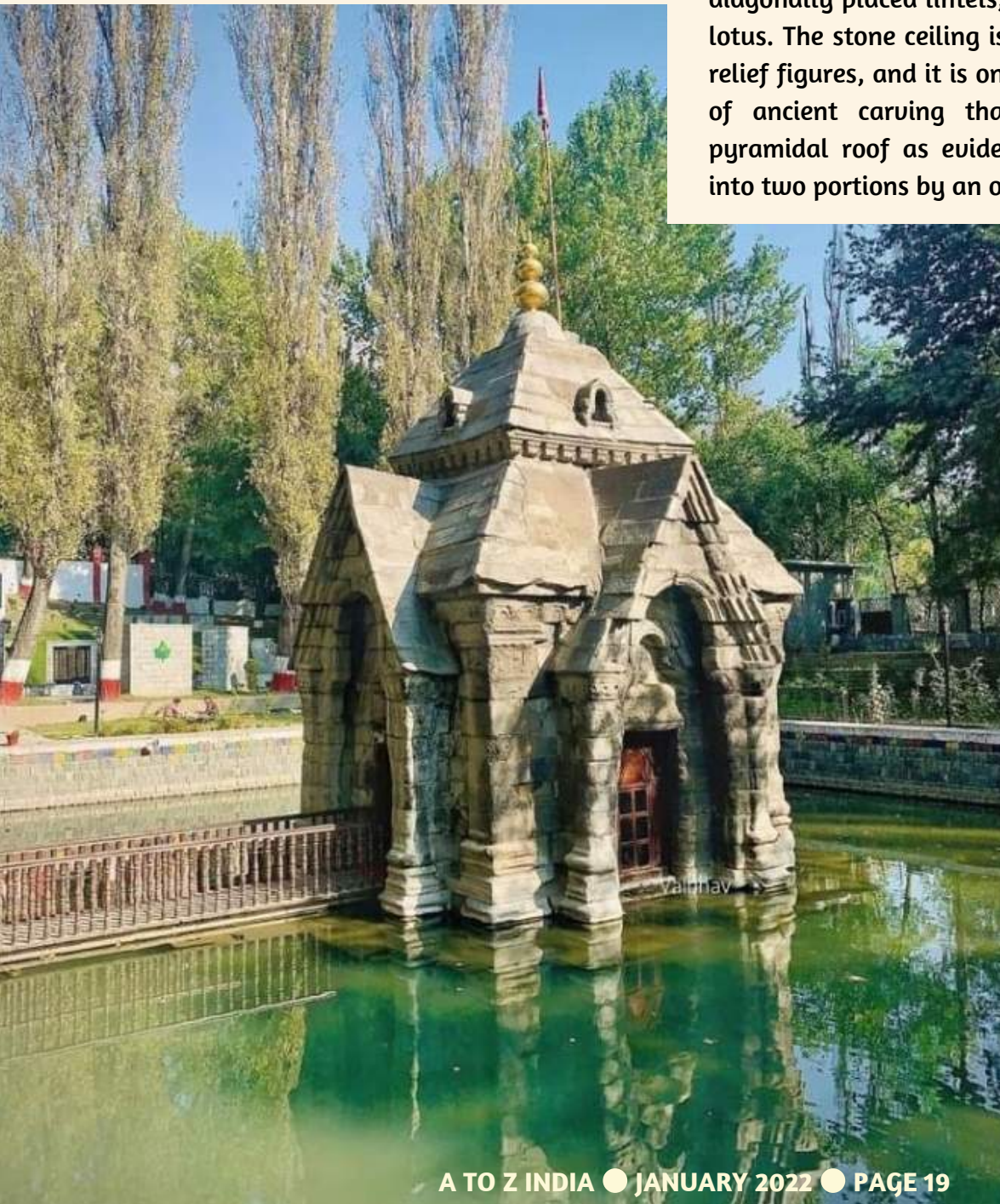


Photograph of the Meruwardhanaswami temple at Pandrethan near Srinagar in Jammu and Kashmir, in Badami Bagh Cantonment.

Pandrethan, now mostly in ruins, is one of Kashmir's historic capitals, as recorded by Kalhana in his *Rajatarangini*, to have been founded by king Pravarasena in the 6th century CE. Its name is derived from *Puranadishthana* or 'old town'.



This small stone Shiva temple in the picture dates from the mid-10th century, was built by a minister named Meru. It was set in a spring-fed tank and its plinth is now submerged. Its interior has one of the finest surviving temple ceilings in Kashmir, consisting of three intersecting squares formed by diagonally placed lintels, the soffit decorated with a lotus. The stone ceiling is elaborately carved in bas-relief figures, and it is one of the most perfect pieces of ancient carving that exists in Kashmir. The pyramidal roof as evident in the image is divided into two portions by an ornamental band.



The Shiva Tribe and it's story:

The true facts about Nandi

 [Indira Sriuatsa](#)

'Loyalty' is a term that is both a positive and a difficult one at the same time. Positive because it makes loyal persons loved by people and, difficult because always maintaining loyalty in various situations can be a real challenge for them. But it is possible to overcome any situation if a person has loyalty along with ultimate devotion, love and fondness for another. The character with all these aspects reminds us of Nandi, known as the vehicle of Lord Shiva.

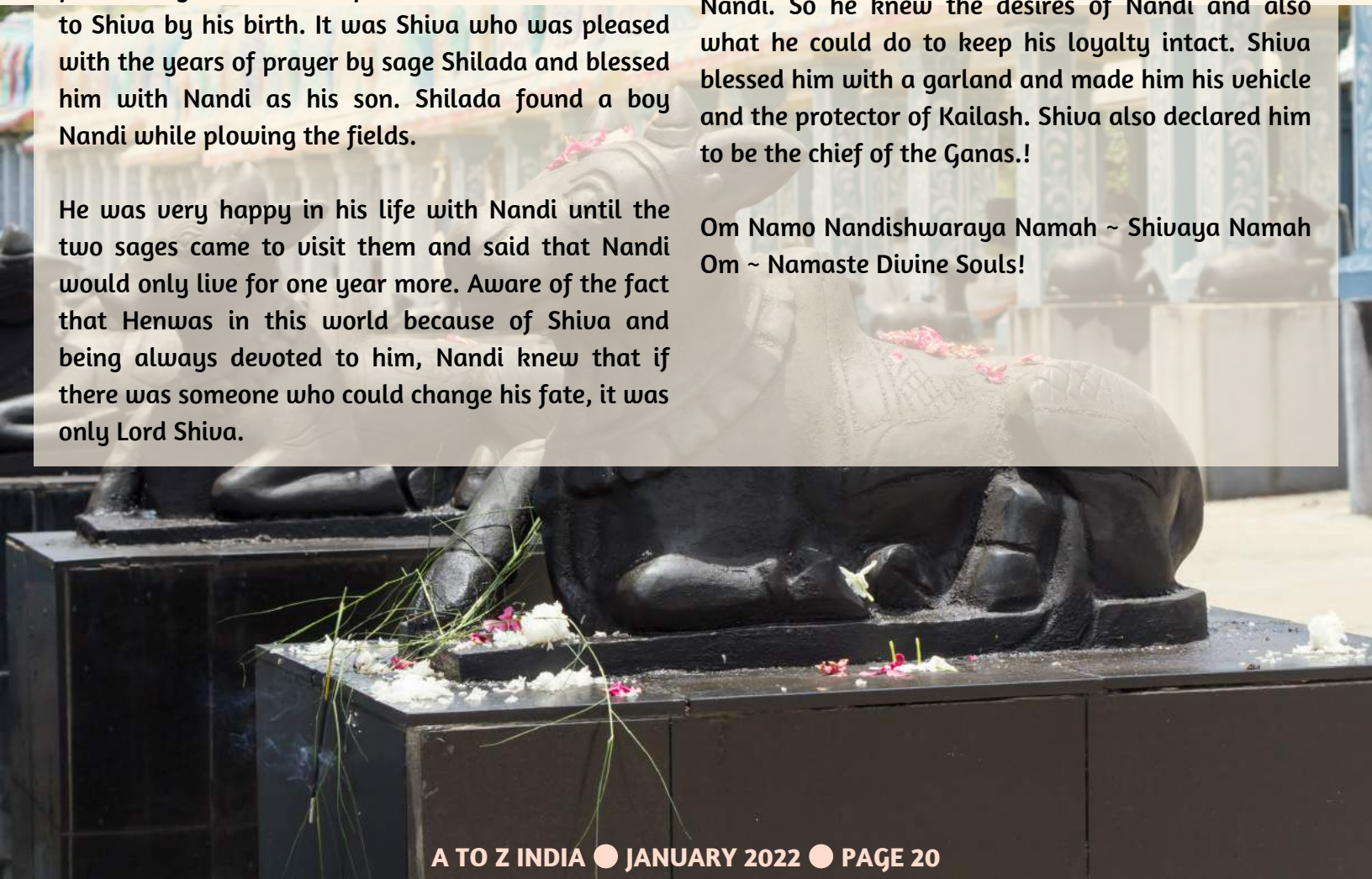
Yes, it is true that Nandi is the vehicle of Lord Shiva and is also known as the gatekeeper of Kailash, but this is not the only definition by which the Nandi should be remembered. The way he devoted his life in serving Lord Shiva and his family, he has taken the place of the most trusted, faithful and dedicated personality in Hindu scriptures. Nandi is connected to Shiva by his birth. It was Shiva who was pleased with the years of prayer by sage Shilada and blessed him with Nandi as his son. Shilada found a boy Nandi while plowing the fields.

He was very happy in his life with Nandi until the two sages came to visit them and said that Nandi would only live for one year more. Aware of the fact that He was in this world because of Shiva and being always devoted to him, Nandi knew that if there was someone who could change his fate, it was only Lord Shiva.



Nandi knew that the pure faith and devotion can make anything possible and can be the ultimate way to get close to Lord Shiva. He didn't want to live a life without Lord Shiva. So when Shiva appeared before Nandi and asked what he wanted, Nandi asked if he could always serve Shiva. After seeing the most beautiful person in front of him, Nandi knew that he didn't want anything except for the opportunity to serve Shiva. It was Shiva who created Nandi. So he knew the desires of Nandi and also what he could do to keep his loyalty intact. Shiva blessed him with a garland and made him his vehicle and the protector of Kailash. Shiva also declared him to be the chief of the Ganas.!

Om Namo Nandishwaraya Namah ~ Shivaya Namah
Om ~ Namaste Divine Souls!





***Incredible India:
Images of
India
through
Visuals***



***Incredible India:
Images of
India
through
Visuals***



 **Chandra**





முனிவரின் கோபம்



வசிஷ்டர் சரஸ்வதியின் நதி கரையில்
அமர்ந்து தவம் செய்து கொண்டிருந்தார்.



வசிஷ்டரின் பெரிய எதிரியான விகவாமித்திரர் அவரைக் கண்டார்.



முனிவர்
வசிஷ்டர்
தன்னுடைய
சுற்றுப்புறத்தை
அறியாது தவம்
கிடக்கிறார்



சரஸ்வதி தேவியே,
நான் உன்னை
அழைக்கிறேன்

Goddess Saraswati's Story

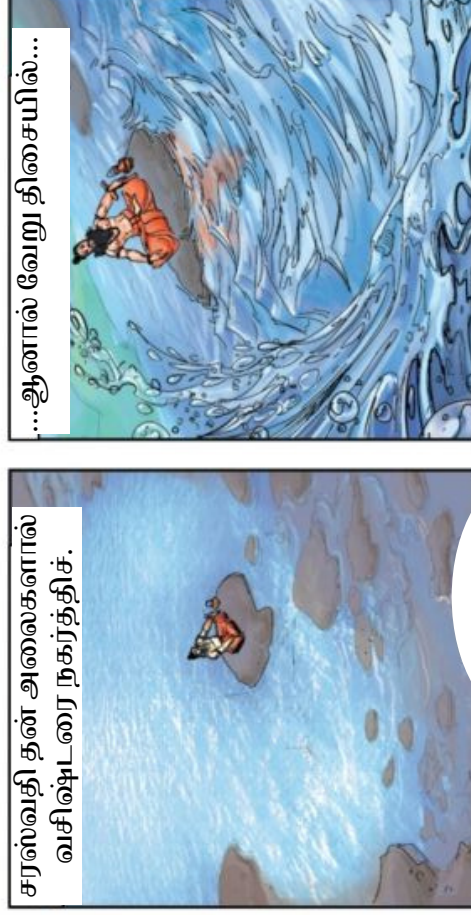


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வசிஷ்டரை
என் அலைகளால்
அழைத்துச்
செல்கிறேன்

விஸ்வாமித்திரர் மன மகிழ்ந்தார்

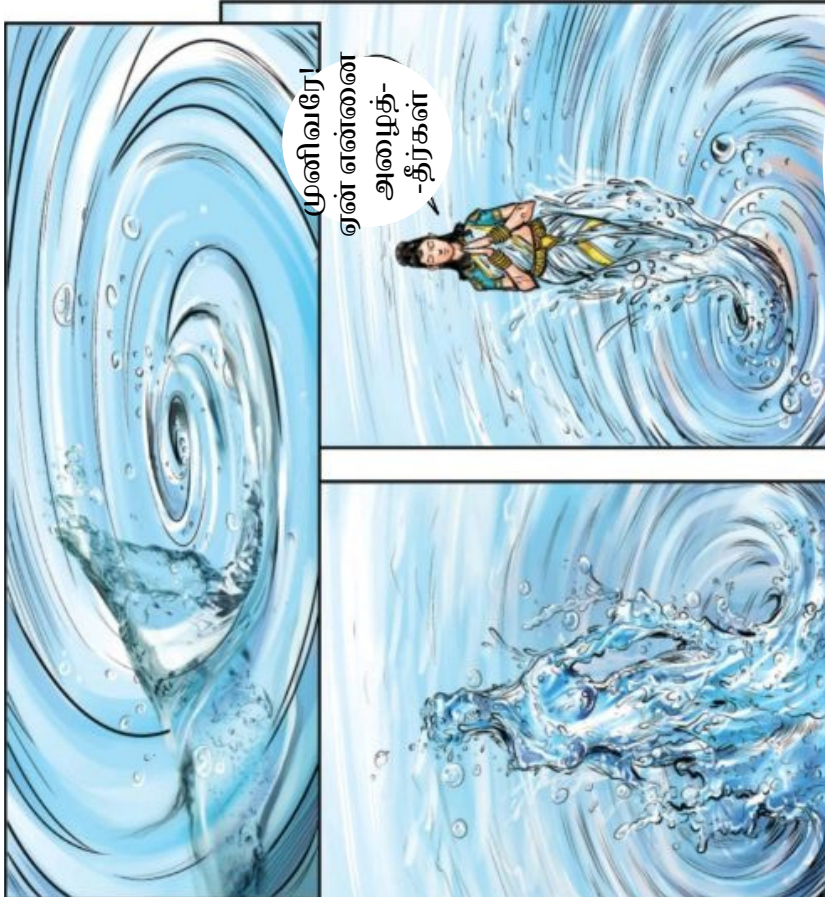


சரஸ்வதி தன் அலைகளால்
வசிஷ்டரை நகர்த்திச்.

....ஆனால் வேறு திசையில்...



... எனக்கு இது
கோபம்
உண்டாக்குகிறது



முனிவரே!
ஏன் என்னை
அழைத்-
-தீர்கள்



இவ்விருவரையும்
சமாளிக்க என்னிடம்
ஒரு யோசனை
உள்ளது



வசிஷ்டரை உன்
அலைகளால்
என்னிடம் அழைத்து
வா

The Cultural Conquest: Goddess Saraswati's Story



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விஸ்வாமித்திரர் சாபத்தால் சரஸ்வதி நதி சிவப்பாக மாறியது

அச்சமயத்தில்
அங்கு வந்த
முனிவர்கள்.



என் கவலை
எப்போது
தீருமோ?



சரஸ்வதியின்
கதையை கேட்டனர்

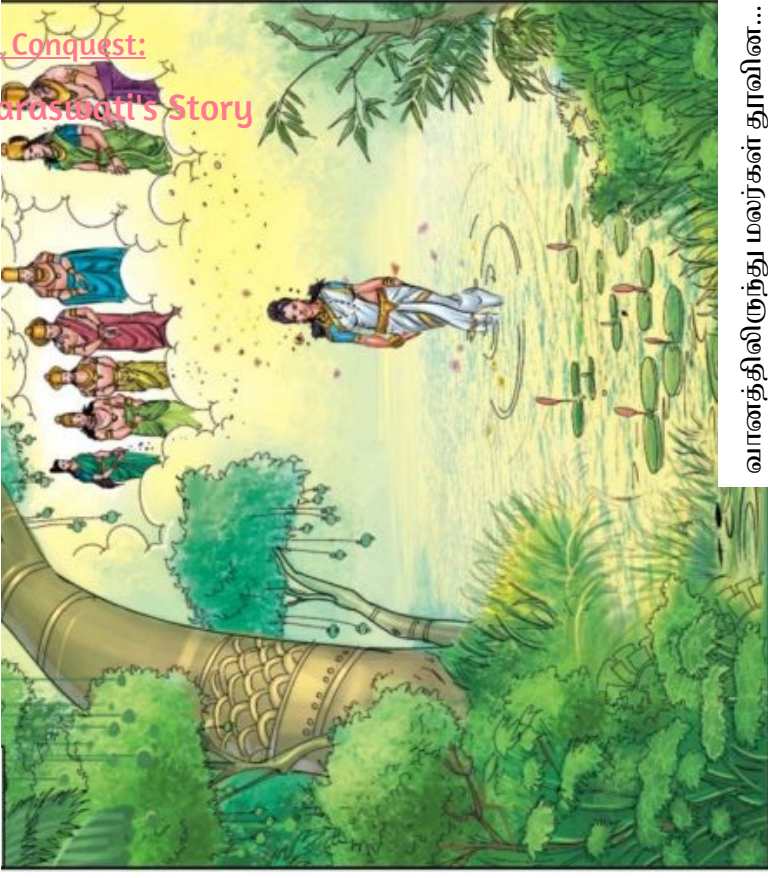
ஓம்...

சரஸ்வதியின்
நல்லெண்ணத்தால்
முனிவர்கள்
சாபத்தை
நீக்கினர்



வானத்திலிருந்து மலர்கள் தூவின...

தூய நதியானாள் சரஸ்வதி.
அன்று முதல் மக்கள் அந்த தூய நீரில் நீராடுவர்.





ANCIENT INDIAN SCRIPTURES DESCRIBE SARASWATI IN THREE FORMS - AS A GODDESS, AS A RIVER AND AS SPEECH.

THERE ARE SEVERAL VERSIONS OF THE STORY OF SARASWATI'S BIRTH IN INDIAN MYTHOLOGY. ONE VERSION SAYS THAT SHE WAS CREATED FROM BRAHMA'S MIND. WHEN BRAHMA ASKED HER WHO SHE WAS, SHE TOLD HIM THAT SINCE SHE WAS BORN FROM HIM, IT WAS FOR HIM TO GIVE HER A PLACE IN THE UNIVERSE. BRAHMA CALLED HER SARASWATI AND TOLD HER THAT SHE WOULD EXIST IN THREE FORMS. SHE WAS TO STAY ON THE TIP OF EVERYBODY'S TONGUE IN THE FORM OF SPEECH. ANOTHER PORTION OF HER WOULD STAY WITH HIM, AS PART OF HIS BEING. THE THIRD PART OF HER WOULD EXIST AS A RIVER ON EARTH.



THE RIVER SARASWATI IS MENTIONED SEVERAL TIMES IN THE VEDAS. THE WATERS OF THE RIVER ARE SAID TO BE PURE AND PRISTINE. SARASWATISANGAMA, THE PLACE WHERE SARASWATI JOINS THE OCEAN, IS CONSIDERED HOLY. THERE ARE VARIOUS STORIES IN INDIAN MYTHOLOGY THAT TALK OF THIS PLACE. ONE SUCH STORY IS ABOUT CHANDRA, THE MOON GOD. CHANDRA MARRIED DAKSHA'S TWENTY-SEVEN DAUGHTERS, BUT HE LOVED ONE MORE THAN THE OTHERS. HER NAME WAS ROHINI. HIS OTHER WIVES FELT NEGLECTED AND COMPLAINED TO THEIR FATHER.

DAKSHA CURSED CHANDRA TO SUFFER AND LOSE HIS RADIANCE. WITHOUT THE MOON'S LIGHT, THE WORLD FELL INTO DARKNESS AND PEOPLE WERE PANIC-STRICKEN. THE GODS WENT TO DAKSHA FOR HELP. CHANDRA APOLOGISED FOR HIS BEHAVIOUR. DAKSHA FORGAVE HIM AND SAID THAT IF HE TOOK A DIP IN THE SARASWATISANGAMA, HIS GLOW WOULD RETURN FOR HALF OF EVERY MONTH. CHANDRA DID AS HE WAS TOLD. THE WATERS OF THE SARASWATI PURIFIED HIM AND THE WORLD WAS SAVED FROM DARKNESS AND CHAOS.

SARASWATI'S WHITE CLOTHES REPRESENT PURITY OF THOUGHT. HER SIMPLE APPEARANCE SIGNIFIES THE FACT THAT WISDOM AND KNOWLEDGE ARE BEYOND MATERIAL WEALTH. SARASWATI'S ATTIRE ALSO HAS HINTS OF BLUE. THE BLUE REFLECTS HER FORM AS A RIVER AND SIGNIFIES FLUIDITY.



People & Culture:

The Great Religion Of Buddhism

 **Srivatsa Bakthisaran**

1600 years old Mandpeswar Buddhist caves, Borivali, Mumbai, Maharashtra state of India.

The caves are believed to have been built approximately 1500 to 1600 years ago, nearly around the same time as Jogeshwari caves (which were built between 520-550 CE).

The caves were originally cut by Buddhist monks.

Most of the early rock-cut temples and rock-art in India was created by Buddhist monks. The monks were the missionaries of the revolutionary message of the Buddha and the best places to spread the new message where the nodes of trade routes.

Maharashtra and many of its hills in the Western Ghats fit their purpose. The monks would dig out prayer halls or chaitya-grihas in the caves, while building votive stupas and dwelling places for themselves. Here they would meditate and influence the passing traders and anyone else who happened by.

The hills around Mumbai were at the juncture of the sea trade routes

ஐதகா கதைகள்:

஁றும்பு மற்றும் புறாவும்

👉 ஆதித்தியன்

஁ரு காலை வேளையில் ஆற்றின் கரையோரத்தில் மரத்தின் மேல் புறா ஁ன்று அமர்ந்திருந்தது. திடீரென்று அது ஆற்றில் ஁றும்பு ஁ன்று விழுந்ததைப் பார்த்தது. அந்த ஁றும்பு உயிருக்கு போராடிக் கொண்டிருந்தது. "நான் ஁றும்பை காப்பாற்ற வேண்டும்" ஁ன்று புறா நினைத்தது.



அது ஁றும்புக்கு முன்னால் ஁ரு இலையைக் தாக்கியெறிந்தது. இலையை ஁றும்பு கண்டது! ஁றும்பு இலையின் மேல் ஏறியது. நீரில் மூழ்காமல் காப்பாற்றப்பட்டது.

ஐதகா கதைகள்:

ஂறும்பு மற்றும் புறாவும்

ஆதித்தியன்

கரையை அடைந்ததும், ஂறும்பு ஁ரு நிம்மதி பெருமூச்சு அடைந்தது. புறாவிற்கு அது நன்றி கூறியது. அன்று முதல் அவ்விரண்டும் மிகவும் சிறந்த நண்பர்கள் ஆயின.



஁ரு நாள், ஂறும்பு ஆற்றின் கரைக்கு அருகில் திரிந்து கொண்டிருந்தது. திடீரென்று அது ஁ரு வேட்டைக்காரனை பார்த்தது. "ஂங்கே அவன் செல்கிறான்?" ஂன வியந்தது ஂறும்பு.

ஐதகா கதைகள்:

ஐறும்பு மற்றும் புறாவும்

ஆதித்தியன்

வேட்டைக்காரனைப் பின்தொடர்ந்து வந்தது ஐறும்பு. அவனது தீய நோக்கத்தை உடனடியாக புரிந்து கொண்டது ஐறும்பு. அவன் சுடப் போகும்போது, ஐறும்பு அவன் காலை கடித்தது. அவனது கால்களை அது கடித்தவுடன் "ஆஆஈஈ!" என வேட்டைக்காரன் கத்தினான்.



அவனுடைய அம்பு இலக்கைத் தவறியது. புறாவின் உயிர் காப்பாற்றப்பட்டது. "நன்றி, அன்பே ஐறும்பு!" என புறா சொன்னது. "நான் உன் கருணையை மட்டுமே திருப்பிக் கொடுத்தேன், அன்பே!" என்றது ஐறும்பு. அவர்கள் எதிர்காலத்தில் என்னென்றும் நண்பர்களாக இருந்தனர்.

At a distance of 80 km from Madurai and 100 km from Tirunelveli, Srivilliputhur Andal Temple is an ancient Hindu temple situated at Srivilliputhur in Virudhunagar district of Tamilnadu. This is one of the popular temples in Tamilnadu and also one of the 108 divya desams of Lord Vishnu. The 11 tier Raja gopuram is the tallest in Tamilnadu and is also the Emblem of Tamil Nadu Government.

The temple is dedicated to Lord Vishnu, who is worshipped as Vatapatrasayi and his consort Lakshmi as Andal. It is believed to be the birthplace of two of the Alwars, namely Periazhwar and his foster daughter Andal. The Alwars lived in 8th century, so that the existence of the temple can be traced even before. Vatapatra Sayanar Temple was constructed by the King Villi who ruled the place. The tall temple tower was constructed by Peria Alwar with the help provided by the Pandian king Vallabadevan (765-815 AD). The Andal Shrine had been constructed by different kings of Pandya dynasty at different times. King Thirumalai Nayak had done many renovations.

Srivilliputhur Temple is associated with the life of Andal, who was found under a Tulsi plant in the garden inside the temple by Periazhwar. She is believed to have worn the garland before dedicating it to the presiding deity of the temple. Periazhwar, who later found it, was highly upset and stopped the practice. It is believed Vishnu appeared in his dream and asked him to dedicate the garland worn by Andal to him daily, which is a practice followed during the modern times. It is also believed that Ranganatha of Srirangam married Andal, who later merged with him.



The temple consists of two parts. The first part is called Vatapatra Sayanar Temple and the second part is known as Andal Shrine. A granite wall surrounds the temple, enclosing all its shrines, the garden where Andal was found and two of its three bodies of water. The greatest attraction of the temple is the Rajagopuram with eleven tiers and 192 feet height. It is one among the tallest towers of temples in Tamilnadu. It is also the Emblem of Tamil Nadu Government.

In the sanctum sanctorum the idol of the Lord in a reclining posture, his consorts Sridevi and Bhoodevi, are shown attending to him at his feet. Sage Bhṛigu stands near his head and Markandeya is near his feet. The banyan tree whose leaf is known as Vatapatram, on which the Lord is said to rest in the form of a baby during deluge, is at his head. Images of Panchamurtis, Thumburu, Narada, Sanatkumara, Kinnara Mithuna, the Sun and the Moon are shown all around the Lord as well as representations of Villi and Puttan, who stand reverently at his feet. The sanctum sanctorum has three doorways from which the Lord can be seen in His reclining posture. A flight of stairs leads to the sanctum sanctorum; below them is a large, impressive hall with detailed wooden carvings depicting incidents from the Puranas.

The Chitritsavam for 9 days, Aadi Pooram, Vasantha Utsavam, Peria Perumal Bramhotsavam, Theppostavam and Andal Mannar Thirukalyanam for 10 days are the important festivals celebrated in this temple with great pomp and fervor.

Timings: 6.30 AM - 1 PM & 4 PM - 9 PM





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Owned, Published & Printed by INDIRA SRIVATSA,
Printed at SRI AATHI LAKSHMI GRAPHICS,
14/33, Sivan Koil Cross Street, Kodambakkam, Chennai - 600024 &
Published from E 002, Premier Grihalakshmi Apartments,
Elango Nagar South, Virugambakkam, Chennai - 600092.
EDITOR: INDIRA SRIVATSA

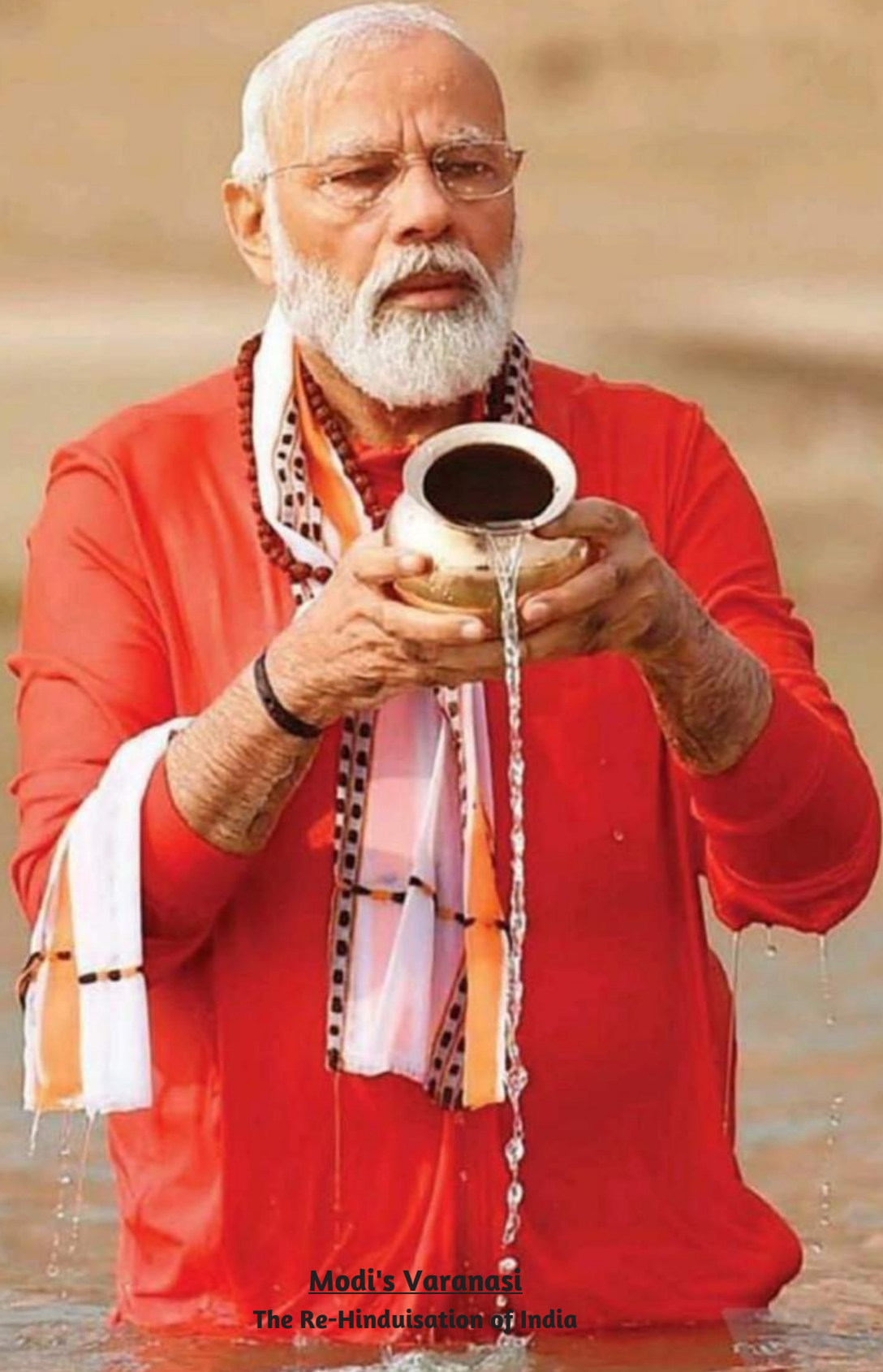
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அனுப்பவேண்டிய
மின்னஞ்சல் முகவரி:
editor.indira@gmail.com



ஆங்கிலம் மற்றும் தமிழ்
மாத இதழ்

A TO Z INDIA
ENGLISH & TAMIL MONTHLY MAGAZINE
PUBLISHED ON THE FIRST WEEK OF EVERY MONTH
REG. WITH REGISTRAR OF NEWSPAPERS FOR INDIA
UNDER NUMBER TNBIL/2017/75531
R. DIS NO. 757/2017 ROC NUMBER L-105291/2021



Modi's Varanasi
The Re-Hinduisation of India